

# NIDDK Fellows Newsletter

## The NIDDK Fellows Advisory Board (FAB)

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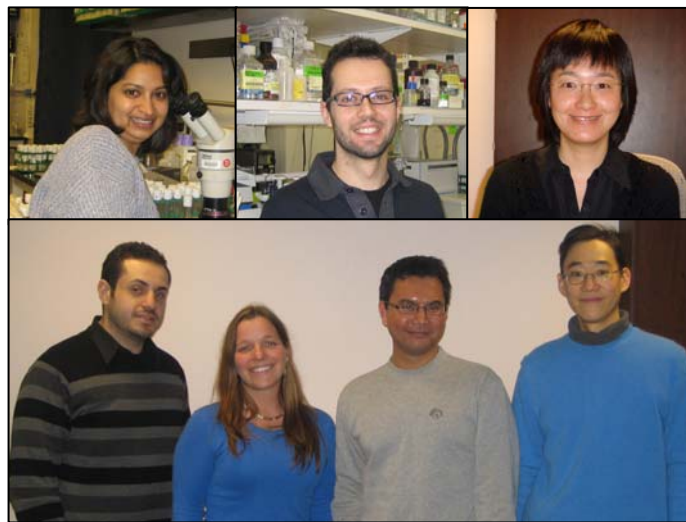
The Fellows Advisory Board (FAB) in collaboration with the NIDDK Fellowship Office has started a monthly newsletter to announce events and news. If you would like to help write articles for the newsletter or have any questions or comments regarding the newsletter or FAB, please contact:

Anna Burkart  
[burkart@mail.nih.gov](mailto:burkart@mail.nih.gov)

In this second part of a two-part series, the Newsletter is exploring the lives of the Fellows Advisory Board (FAB), which works with the Office of Fellow Recruitment and Career Development to improve the overall training experience for fellows within the intramural research program. This two-part series, allows NIDDK fellows to learn who the FAB members are, which laboratories they work in, what their research interests are, possible career goals and future aspirations, as well as any hobbies or interests outside of the lab. We are always looking for new members to join the FAB, so please contact us for more information!

### Rasika Kalamegham

Rasika is leaving the NIH this month to pursue a career in science policy at Research!America, a non-profit group in Alexandria, VA. Rasika worked in Brian Oliver's laboratory in LCDB. Her research focused on sex determination in germ cells of drosophila. Rasika joined the NIH in 2005 and subsequently the FAB in 2008. Rasika founded and started editing the NIDDK Fellows Newsletter in September 2008. Her graduate studies were conducted at Pennsylvania State University. When she isn't revolutionizing the world of science, Rasika enjoys politics, reading, baking, hanging out at art



Top, left to right: Rasika Kalamegham, Athanasios Vasilopoulos, Rong Rong. Bottom, left to right: Mazen Nouredin, Heather Baker, Chaya Pooput, Jason Wan. Not pictured: Kareem Washington

galleries and cinemas, as well as catching up on documentaries.

### Athanasios Vasilopoulos

Athanasios works in Chuxia Deng's laboratory in GDDB. His research is focused on cell cycle regulation and tumorigenesis. Specifically, he is interested in studying the mechanism of BRCA1 associated tumor formation and the role of cancer stem cells in this process. He joined the NIH in March 2006 and the FAB board in 2008. Athanasios did both his undergraduate and graduate work in Greece. He hopes to finish up his fellowship within the next 2 years and move on to a career in academia. When not in the lab, he enjoys

playing basketball.

### Rong Rong

Rong works in Leslie Baier's laboratory in the Diabetes Genetics Section at the Phoenix Branch. Her research examines type-2 diabetes and obesity susceptibility genes in Pima Indians. Rong joined the NIH in December 2005 and joined the FAB in 2008. Rong obtained her PhD from the University of Hong Kong. When finished at the NIH, Rong hopes to continue studies with diabetes and obesity and hopes to become a Physician-Scientist in the area of genetics, type-2 diabetes, and obesity. Outside of the lab, Rong enjoys Chinese painting.

## The NIDDK FAB Group continued from Page 1

### Mazen Nouredin

Mazen works in Jake Liang's lab in LDB. His research interests are in three areas of liver disease: Primary biliary cirrhosis, hepatitis C, and nonalcoholic steatohepatitis. In PBC, Mazen is interested in developing a scoring system which will improve correlation with disease severity and progression. In chronic hepatitis C infection, his interests lie in elucidating the specific mechanisms of ribavirin and how it contributes to the efficacy of interferon. In NASH, Mazen is interested in identifying novel therapies which may ultimately improve outcomes in this potentially dangerous disease. Mazen joined the NIH in July of 2008 and the FAB in December 2008. Previously, he was a research fellow and resident at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. During his residency, he also worked at the USC Liver Research Center. His future career goals involve researching liver diseases as an independent PI in an academic setting where he can apply his lab experience with clinical trials. Outside of the lab, Mazen enjoys going to the gym, playing basketball, and watching movies with friends.

### Heather Baker

Heather works in Carole Bewley's laboratory in LBC. Her research is focused on natural products drug discovery from marine microorganisms and

sponges. She joined the NIH in March 2006 and the FAB in September 2008. Heather's prior research experience was in Fort Pierce, Florida at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution. Heather's future plans include returning to graduate school and continuing research in marine natural products. She enjoys all athletic activities that do not involve catching or throwing a ball, in particular, horseback riding, hiking, and SCUBA diving.

### Chaya Pooput

Chaya currently investigates gene regulation in Hans Luecke's laboratory in LBC. Prior to joining the Luecke lab in May 2008, Chaya worked in Kenneth Kirk's laboratory studying the syntheses of biologically active compounds containing fluorine and biological studies of these compounds on targeted receptors. He joined the NIH in September 2005 and the FAB in September 2007. Chaya received his Master's degree in France and his PhD in organic chemistry from the University of Florida. He hopes to have a career in public/international relations and science policy. When not in the lab, Chaya can be found organizing social activities for the NIDDK fellows around the greater Washington, D.C. area. Be sure to join him and other fellows for one of the upcoming happy hours or trips into D.C.!

### Jason Wan

Jason works in Jeremy Berg's laboratory in LMB. His research focuses on functional studies of zinc finger domains in the TNF-alpha pathway. Jason joined the NIH in 2005 and the FAB in 2008. He obtained his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. His future aspirations include saving the earth while conducting good science along the way. Outside of the lab, Jason enjoys playing tennis.

### Kareem Washington

Kareem works in John F. Tisdale's laboratory in MCHB. His research involves improving transduction efficiency of lentiviral vectors used in gene therapy clinical trials for Sickle Cell Disease, specifically to analyze whether transduction efficiency is inhibited by intrinsic immune factors. He is also working on generating a molecule that has the potential to rewrite mature mRNA by spliceosome mediated transplicing to correct dysfunctional proteins. Kareem joined the NIH in 2005 and the FAB in 2006/2007. He did his graduate work at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and hopes to become a principle investigator focused on researching and improving tools for clinical therapies for Sickle Cell Disease. When not in the lab, Kareem enjoys rock climbing, riding motorcycles, and playing the drums.



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### Workshop: Networking with Novartis

**Description:** OITE will be hosting the Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research (NIBR) headquartered in Cambridge, MA. Information on research at NIBR is available at <http://www.novartis.com/research/nibr/index.shtml>. First, join OITE from 2-3 PM to learn about the NIBR Postdoctoral Fellowship program. Second, from 3:30-4 PM, NIBR will be recruiting for permanent employees. These sessions will be followed by a combined networking event from 4-5 PM for those interested in either Postdoctoral fellowships or permanent positions.

**Speaker:** Jennifer Leeds, PhD, Senior Research Investigator I in the Infectious Diseases Department at NIBR

**Date/Time/Location:** February 10 (Tuesday), 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Building 50, Room 1227

Please register in advance.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xuJQSkE8vbGwmnOpyndr4A\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xuJQSkE8vbGwmnOpyndr4A_3d_3d)

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### February/Early March Social Events:

Thursday, February 12: FelCom Happy Hour at Sapphire Café

Monday, February 16 (Federal Holiday): Mount Vernon visit

Saturday, February 21: American Art Museum: Photo Exhibition  
"Accommodating Nature" by Frank Gohlke

Wednesday, February 25: NIDDK Happy Hour/ Wii Party at BlackFinn

Saturday, February 28: Arabesque: the Art of the Arab World at the Kennedy Center

Sunday, March 8: Pompeii exhibition

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### Newsletter Naming and Logo Contest

The NIDDK Fellows Newsletter is still looking for a new name and logo in addition to the new layout and design. If you have any ideas, please send them to Anna Burkart at [burkarta@niddk.nih.gov](mailto:burkarta@niddk.nih.gov).

**If your newsletter name and logo are chosen, you will receive a fabulous gift bag from the Fellowship Office!**

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For more information about social events contact Chaya Pooput:

[pooputc@niddk.nih.gov](mailto:pooputc@niddk.nih.gov)

Submit your ideas for the NIDDK Fellows Newsletter naming and logo contest and you may win a fabulous gift bag!

NIDDK/NIH  
9000 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20892

We're on the Web!  
[http://fellowshipoffice.  
niddk.nih.gov](http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov)

## Grant Writing Workshops

### Grant Writing 102 Workshops:

The next Grant Writing 102 Course will begin on **Monday, March 9, 2009**. The course length is for three sessions of 1.5 – 2 hours each, spread one week apart. It is important to attend all three classes, if at all possible.

#### Dates/Time/Location:

Monday, **March 9**, 10:00am–12:00pm, Building 12B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room #4055

Monday, **March 16**, 10:00am–12:00pm, Building 12B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room #4055

Monday, **March 23**, 10:00am–12:00pm, Building 12B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room #4055

If you are interested in attending the Grant Writing 102 Workshops, please register (via email with [LorraineM@intra.niddk.nih.gov](mailto:LorraineM@intra.niddk.nih.gov), or by phone at 301-496-6685) as soon as conveniently possible as there is limited seating in the room. You will receive a registration confirmation from Lorraine. This course is free of charge and open to all NIDDK Fellows.

It is strongly recommended that you have taken Grant Writing 101 before enrolling in Grant Writing 102, although the choice is up to you.

For future planning, Grant Writing 101 will be offered again in September 2009.

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## Grant Writing Deadline

### Nancy Nossal Fellowship Award

The deadline for applications for this fellowship is **Monday, March 2, 2009**.

NIDDK Postdoctoral Fellows, Research Fellows, Visiting Fellows, and Clinical Fellows are all eligible to apply for this award. An advanced graduate degree such as MD, PhD, or their equivalents is necessary. US citizenship is not required --- the program is open to Foreign Scientists and International Fellows from all countries. Candidates must apply within their first two years of starting their work at NIDDK to be eligible to apply. The application deadline must come before the second anniversary of the Fellow's entry on duty (EOD) date to be considered eligible.

Successful applicants will receive a one-time cash award of \$5,000 for research fellows and clinical fellows, or a stipend increase of \$2,500 per year for visiting fellows and IRTA postdoctoral fellows.

For a list of past award recipients, please check out this link:

<http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov/audience/Previous-Award-Recipients.doc>

For additional information about this award, please check out the website:

<http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov/audience/fellowship-award.shtml> or contact Lorraine Moore at [LorraineM@intra.niddk.nih.gov](mailto:LorraineM@intra.niddk.nih.gov); 301-496-6685.

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